

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to merely clarify the recited subject matter without any intention of narrowing the scope of any of the claims. Further, new claims 57-75 have been added. New claims 57-75 find support in the application, including pages 23-129 of the specification and Figures 3-12. Applicants have amended the currently pending claims in order to expedite prosecution and do not, by this amendment, intend to abandon subject matter of the claims as originally filed or later presented. Moreover, Applicants reserve the right to pursue such subject matter in a continuing application. Claims 1 and 57-75 are pending in this patent application. Reconsideration of the rejections in view of the remarks below is requested.

The Examiner asserted that the Information Disclosure Statement filed January 31, 2002 did not comply with 37 C.F.R. §1.98(a)(2) by failing to include a copy of each U.S. patent, foreign patent application publication, foreign patent, and other publication listed on the PTO-1449 included with the Information Disclosure Statement. In response, Applicants respectfully submit that per 37 C.F.R. §1.98(d) these copies were not required to be submitted in this application. As submitted at the top of page 2 of the Information Disclosure Statement filed January 31, 2002,

The references listed on the PTO-1449 were cited by or submitted to the Patent Office in the Patent Application No. 09/206,381, filed December 7, 1998 and/or Patent Application No. 08/767,257, filed December 13, 1996, which are relied upon for an earlier filing date under 35 U.S.C. § 120. Thus, copies of these references are not enclosed. 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(d).

Accordingly, Applicants kindly request that the Examiner consider the Information Disclosure Statement filed January 31, 2002, copies of the documents for which may be found in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/206,381, filed December 7, 1998 and/or U.S. Patent Application No. 08/767,257, filed December 13, 1996, applications which are relied upon for an earlier filing date under 35 U.S.C. § 120.

The Examiner objected to Figures 2-5 for lacking numbering of the items illustrated. Applicants respectfully submit that the numbering of items in Figures is not required, particularly where as here the nature of the subject matter sought to be patented may be illustrated without numbering of items illustrated in the Figures. But, in any event, Applicants submit that the items illustrated in Figure 3 are already numbered and submit that the items

illustrated in Figures 2, 4 and 5 are clearly marked with appropriate labels to which corresponding references are made in the specification. Applicants further submit that these Figures have been previously approved by the U.S. Patent Office and included in the issued U.S. Patent No. 5,903,882. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully traverse the objection to Figures 2-5 for lacking reference numbers and submit that Figures 2-5 are proper.

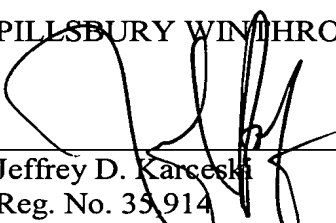
The Examiner rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 5,903,882. Applicants have amended claim 1 so that it is no longer co-extensive in scope with claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 5,903,882. Thus, this rejection is now moot and Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 57-75 are allowable.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to discuss them.

Should any fees be due, please charge them to our deposit account no. 03-3975, under our order no. 061047/0268225. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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